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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: PRT SALAH AD DIN: GOI AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
RELATIONSHIP REMAINS STRAINED

Classified By: PRT Team Leader Steve Buckler for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is a PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din cable.

Summary

[1](#)2. (C) Salah ad Din Provincial government officials tell PRTOffs that on every issue that is important to them - from provincial powers, to De-Baathification and institutionalizing arrangements made on the tribal security front - the central government has failed to deliver on promises made. Provisional government officials, including the Governor and Deputy Governor, complain there is limited contact between the province and the central government, aside from required discussions on the distribution of GOI capital budget funds to the province. An increase in the GOI 2008 budget allocation to Salah ad Din argues for GOI commitment to the Province, despite the absence of progress on other key reconciliation issues. End Summary.

Baghdad Fails to Deliver

[1](#)3. (C) According to provincial government officials, the central government has failed to deliver on numerous promises made on issues of concern to the Sunnis in Salah ad Din (SaD). The lack of a substantive role for the province in the absence of a Provincial Powers Act inhibits the province's ability to affect programs that would make a positive difference in the lives of the residents of Salah ad Din.

2008 Budget is One Bright Spot

[1](#)4. (C) The one bright spot in the SaD/GoI relationship is in the allocation of capital budget funds. The Province recently received an unexpected surprise when the GoI increased its 2008 budget allocation from USD 96 million (117 billion ID) to USD 144.7 million (176 billion ID). This allocation will challenge the ability of the Province to monitor and oversee the spending of this money in 2008. However, in the absence of movement on other reconciliation issues, it is the fundamental manifestation of GoI commitment to the Province.

SaD Residents Doubt GOI Intentions
on Reconciliation

[1](#)5. (C) On the National Reconciliation front, there are two major issues of interest to province residents. First,

resolving the De-Baathification issue is critical given Saddam Hussein's status as a "native son of Salah ad Din" and the large numbers of former regime military and civilian employees. Despite the promise that De-Baathification legislation will soon be passed to allow former Baathists back into public life, the lack of any real progress reinforces for the average Salah ad Din resident the notion that Salah ad Din is of little strategic value to the GoI.

¶6. (C) The PRT recently brought the Chairman of the Provincial De-Baathification Commission to Baghdad after the PRT was able to secure a meeting with the National Commission. The meeting was cordial, and the Commission promised action within ten days once the files of all former Baathists contained official dismissal letters. (COMMENT: The National Commission remains annoyed that their repeated calls for the dismissal of Salah ad Din Deputy Governor Abdulla have been ignored by the Provincial Government. END COMMENT).

¶7. (C) The second piece of the reconciliation puzzle is the integration of tribal security units into Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). When the tribal security initiative was initiated in July after Coalition Forces (CF) saw stirrings of an "awakening" among Salah ad Din Sheikhs, various GoI officials, including Prime Minister Maliki, made commitments to fund six police battalions comprised of several thousand officers, which would be filled by security personnel currently employed by Salah ad Din tribes. The leader of the Tribal Support Council, Sheikh Kamees of the dominant Al-Juboori tribe, told PRTOff that he has men to fill these positions, but GoI support has not materialized.

¶8. (C) According to Coalition Forces working with the GoI,

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the new GoI plan is to either take over payments of the current security contracts for the tribal security personnel or to encourage these individuals to take positions in the police, army, or in civilian community service jobs, which the GoI plans to create in the future. The GoI has yet to commit the funding necessary to create the additional police officer positions, claiming that Salah ad Din already has enough allocated positions. Salah ad Din provincial government officials feel this is an indication of low level GOI support for the province.

COMMENT

¶9. (C) One CF Battalion commander told PRTOff that he is trying "to keep hope alive among the Iraqis" while they await improvements in their day-to-day lives. With no tangible benefits or action flowing from the central government, it is increasingly difficult to keep that hope alive. The sudden increase in GOI budget allocation to Salah ad Din, despite the attendant difficulties in the expenditure and monitoring of the funds, contrasts sharply with the phlegmatic efforts by the Central Government to address other core reconciliation needs. END COMMENT.
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